1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

ordinary cultivators have to employ casual labour. The rates of daily wages have now increased considerably. In 1939 a male labourer was paid 3 to 6 annas a day, while a woman was paid 2 to 4 annas. In 1951, men were paid between 1 rupee and 1 rupee 8 annas per day, while the women got 8 to 12 annas per day. Rich landowners employ labourers on the basis of an annual contract also. Rates of payment vary with the age, ability and experience of the person employed; and also partly with the financial position of the employer. According to our statistics wages differ from Rs. 280 to Rs. 120 per year, and may be paid in cash or kind. Depending on the agreement the employee may be paid a cash monthly salary, or he may be paid a part in cash and a part in grain. Very often the agreement includes the following in the wages for the year: an agreed sum at the end of the year, one or two meals a day or a specified quantity of grain every week, and a set or two of new clothes and footwear or a blanket. As a rule advances are drawn from time to time, and when they exceed the stipulated sum the labourer has to agree to work the following year also to repay the debt.

3. THE AGRICULTURAL YEAR

The agriculturists in Shamirpet follow the local almanac. Most of their moves in farm activity depend upon the position of the stars in the sky. According to this almanac a month is divided into two *katis*, each with a duration of approximately fifteen days. Each of these divisions bears a name which indicates a particular position of the stars. According to the traditional agricultural lore of the people the different *katis* are suitable for different kinds of agricultural activities and provide the agriculturist with a schedule for the different stages of his work in the field. Of course, he also takes into consideration other natural factors, such as the possibility of rainfall in the immediate future; but in general his moves follow the time-tested schedule of the Hindu calendar. Muslim agriculturists too follow this calendar and share with their Hindu neighbours their agricultural folklore.

In late summer (i.e. the end of May) the agriculturists keep their fields clear for ploughing in anticipation of a light shower of rain. Invariably there is some rainfall during this period which softens the ground and makes it possible for them to start ploughing. With the advent of this eagerly awaited drizzle the farmers

796 cannot, make clay images at home. These idols are placed prominently in the front or central part of the house. The Brahmins and Komtis first clean the place where the idol is to be lodged, besmear it with cow-dung, then spread some soft sand over it. On this sand they place some leaf-plates, spread rice on them and cover the rice with a new cloth. The idol is placed on this cloth. Among the other castes the idol is placed either on a bunch of mango leaves kept on the floor, or else on a wooden seat. A sacred thread is put on the image, and finally it is marked with vermilion and turmeric. With this it comes to possess life as the deity starts residing within it.

A little lamp is lighted and kept burning in front of the image. At the time of the principal worship which differs in various families, flowers of several varieties are placed on and around the image, vermilion and rice (the latter made yellow with turmeric) are sprinkled on it, and *laddus* (little sweet balls of gram fried in syrup) specially made for the day are offered to the deity. When this is done all members of the household bow down before the idol. Many people express their wishes, which they then expect will be fulfilled with the blessings of Ganesha.

The image is allowed to remain in its place for three to twenty-one days, and is worshipped every day. When it is removed from its place, it is taken to the village tank and immersed in water.

Two special features of this festival deserve to be noted. First, some of the occupational castes worship their tools and implements. For example, the washerman applies vermilion and turmeric pastes to the large earthen pot in which he boils the clothes, and also to the stone on which he beats them clean. The barber does the same to his razors and scissors. The weaver worships the
● [821] paraphernalia of his caste occupation. Secondly, it is believed that seeing the moon on the Chauti day is inauspicious, for anyone who does so may be falsely implicated in theft. But if anyone does see the moon, it is not difficult for him to undo its harmful effects. If he is abused by someone, the ill effect of his having seen the moon can be cleared. Thus in order to be abused by others people seeing the moon on this day indulge in practical jokes and cause offence to them in various ways. In return they are favoured with the abuse which expiates their sin.

Ananta Chaturdashi. Ananta Chaturdashi is observed on the fourteenth day of Bhadrapada by Brahmins only. On this day Vishnu